

## RECORD OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

- A. **Proposed Action:** Western proposes to conduct vegetation removal and access road maintenance between structures 29/1 - 32/1, 32/11 - 33/2 and 34/5 - 34/11 along the existing Electrical District 2-Saguaro #2 115-kV transmission line. This will consist of blading brush and leveling out areas of the existing access road using a dozer with a grader attachment, crew trucks and pickup trucks to get crews to the project area. Western will use a dozer with a grader attachment to maintain the existing access roads. This work is necessary to maintain the safety and reliability of the bulk electrical system.

The attached map shows the project areas are situated within Sections 16, 21, 28 & 33 Township 9 South Range 10 East & Sections 2 & 3 Township 10 South Range 10 East on the Gila and Salt River Meridian, Pinal County, Arizona. Work will be conducted within Western's right of way. The corresponding U.S.G.S. 7.5-minute topographic maps are Eloy North & Samaniego Hills, Arizona. This work is planned to begin the week of March 28, 2011.

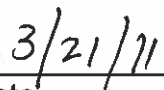
- B. **Categorical Exclusion Applied:** 10 CFR, Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, B1.3: "Routine maintenance activities and custodial services for buildings, structures, right-of-way, infrastructures (e.g. pathways, roads and railroads), vehicles and equipment and localized vegetation and pest control during which operations may be suspended and resumed."

C. **Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410 (b):**

1. The proposed action fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix B to Subpart D.
  - a. The proposed action was reviewed for the requirements of the Endangered Species Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act, and all applicable Department of Energy Orders.
  - b. The proposed action does not require the siting, construction, or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities.
  - c. The proposed action does not disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that pre-exist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled and unpermitted releases.

- d. The proposed action was reviewed and surveyed for impacts to cultural and sensitive biological resources. Cultural and sensitive biological resources have been determined to not be affected.
  2. There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
  3. The proposal is not "connected" to other actions with potentially significant impacts, is not related to other proposed actions with cumulatively significant impacts, and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211.
- D. Determination:** Based on my review of information conveyed to me and in my possession (or attached) concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under DOE Order 451.1A), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class of actions, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.
- E. Special Conditions:**
- 1) **Avoid road improvements such as blading or grading, between Structures 29/2 - 29/12 and Structures 32/12 - 33/2.**
  - 2) **Use hand tools to remove vegetation between Structures 29/2 - 29/12 and Structures 32/12 - 33/2.**
  - 3) **If a Desert Tortoise is encountered, follow the attached BLM guidelines for handling Desert Tortoise encounters.**

  
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John R. Holt  
NEPA Compliance Officer

  
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Date